

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJ: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT LEAD EDITORIAL MONDAY, MAY 6,
WASH POST HEADED "THE AMERICAN PURPOSE IN VIETNAM."

2. THE VOTES SCHEDULED IN THE SENATE TODAY ON AID FOR
VIETNAM OVERRIDE THE ISSUE OF WHETHER, AS SENATOR KENNEDY
URGES, THE PENTAGON SHOULD BE DENIED AUTHORITY TO SPEND
AN ADDITIONAL \$266 MILLION THIS YEAR IN "FOUND" MONEY ON
MILITARY AID TO SAIGON. THIS IS A TECHNICAL ISSUE, THOUGH
IT SHOULD APPEAL TO THE SENATE'S STICKLERS ON FISCAL REGU-
LARITY. PENTAGON BOOKKEEPERS DID NOT STUMBLE UPON THE
\$266 MILLION UNTIL THE FULL HOUSE AND THE SENATE ARMED
SERVICES COMMITTEE HAD BOTH REJECTED A PENTAGON REQUEST
TO RAISE THE CEILING ON FUNDS FOR SOUTH VIETNAM. JUST WHY
THE CONGRESS SHOULD ACCEPT THIS KIND OF EVASIVE SPENDING
PROCEDURE, ON ANYTHING, IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND.

3- THE KEY ISSUE, HOWEVER, IS WHETHER THIS HEFTY DOLLOP
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OF AID PROMOTES RECONCILIATION IN VIETNAM OR MERELY LETS

PRESIDENT THIEU AVOID THE POLITICAL COMPROMISES FORESEEN IN THE PARIS ACCORDS OF JANUARY 1973. THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN USING AID--AS WASHINGTON IS ATTEMPTING TO USE AID NOW IN THE MIDEAST--AS AN EFFECTIVE LEVER FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, AND USING AID TO PROP UP ONE SIDE

AND INDEFINITELY PROLONG A LOCAL WAR. GIVEN THE COMPLEXITY AND CONFUSION OF THE VIETNAM SCENE, THIS IS A DIFFICULT JUDGMENT TO MAKE. BUT IT IS AN ESSENTIAL JUDGMENT, AT LEAST FOR ANY LEGISLATOR WITH SELF-RESPECT.

4. THE ADMINISTRATION, NOTABLY IN SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER'S RECENT LETTER TO SENATOR KENNEDY, HAS PROMOTED THE VIEW THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS SOME INDEPENDENT OBLIGATION TO THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT--"A CERTAIN OBLIGATION (DERIVED) FROM OUR LONG AND DEEP INVOLVEMENT," AS THE SECRETARY PUT IT. THIS IS A SUBTLE BUT PROFOUND MISREADING OF OUR ACTUAL OBLIGATION, WHICH IS NOT TO SAIGON BUT TO THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION. THE WHOLE POINT OF THE PARIS ACCORDS WAS TO EFFECT THIS CRUCIAL SHIFT IN OUR NATIONAL PURPOSE IN VIETNAM. IT WAS ON THAT BASIS THAT MR. NIXON SOUGHT AND WON RE-ELECTION IN 1972. IT IS DISTURBING NOW TO FIND HIS SECRETARY OF STATE TROTTING OUT SUCH A RETROGRESSIVE RATIONALE.

5. IN FACT, LEGISLATORS PONDERING THEIR AID VOTE WOULD DO WELL TO RE-READ THE WHOLE KISSINGER LETTER TO SEE WHETHER THEY ARE BEING ASKED TO VOTE, IN EFFECT, FOR PEACE OR WAR. FOR THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT IN THE ABSENCE OF AMERICAN PRESSURE ON MR. THIEU TO OBSERVE THE DICTATES OF THE PARIS ACCORDS, HE HAS VERY LITTLE INCENTIVE TO DO SO. WE WOULD SINGLE OUT HERE ONLY ONE CHARACTERISTIC STATEMENT MADE BY DR. KISSINGER: "THE PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS IN THE SOUTH DEMONSTRATES THAT THE MILITARY THREAT FROM HANOI IS STILL VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE." HIS PLAIN IMPLICATION WAS THAT HANOI IS VIOLATING THE PEACE AGREEMENT BY KEEPING TROOPS IN THE SOUTH. YET THE ACCORDS PERMIT HANOI TO KEEP IN THE SOUTH AS MANY TROOPS AS IT HAD THERE IN JANUARY 1973. BY SUGGESTING THAT HANOI IS DOING SOMETHING IT HAS NO

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RIGHT TO DO, HE IS IMPLICITLY GRANTING SAIGON AN EXCUSE TO TAKE COUNTERING STEPS IN ITS OWN "SELF-DEFENSE," EVEN THOUGH THOSE STEPS MAY NOT BE CONTEMPLATED IN THE PARIS ACCORDS. IN THE AID VOTE, THE SENATE HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO INFORM THE ADMINISTRATION WHETHER--AND TO WHAT EXTENT--IT AGREES. (END TEXT.) RUSH

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